

SECRET

HR70-14

APPROVED FOR
RELEASE DATE:
13-Sep-2010

TRANSMITTAL SLIP		DATE
		5 June
TO: Mr. Alan Warfield		
ROOM NO.	BUILDING	
	HQ	
REMARKS:		
Returned with thanks.		
FROM: O-ExDir-Comp		
ROOM NO.	BUILDING	EXTENSION

FORM NO. 241
1 FEB 55

REPLACES FORM 36-8
WHICH MAY BE USED.

(47)

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

41184

SECRET 917

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21
ACTION AID 85

INFO GPM #4, INR 07, E 04, IGA 02, EA 06, SS 20, L 03, /131 W

P R 151040Z MAY 68
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8504
INFO CINCPAC 2262
DEPCHJUSMAGTHAI 1835

~~SECRET~~ VIENTIANE 6553

AIDAC

TOAID 2230

SUBJ: AIR CONTRACTOR PILOT FLIGHT TIME RESTRICTIONS

AID/W PASS TO DOD FOR OSD/EA

1. WE WERE SURPRISED AND DISTURBED FIND THAT AIR AMERICA (AAM) AND DEPCHJUSMAG (DCH) HAVE NEGOTIATED NEW CONTRACT, FOR OPERATING H-34 HELICOPTERS, INCORPORATING INCREASED MANNING TABLES AND PILOT FLIGHT TIME RESTRICTIONS WITHOUT CONSULTING OR COORDINATING WITH EITHER [] OR USAID. DCH REPRESENTATIVE INFORMS US THEY WERE FACED WITH AAM INSISTENCE ON FAA PART 121 FLIGHT TIME RESTRICTIONS, AND SINCE NO ALTERNATIVE CRITERIA OFFERED, THEY COULD NOT EXPRESS OPPOSITION WITHOUT IMPLIED ADVOCATION OF LESS SAFE OPERATIONS AND ASSUMPTION LIABILITY FOR CONSEQUENCES.

2. NONE OF USING AGENCIES, INCLUDING DCH, BELIEVE US DOMESTIC AIR CARRIER CRITERIA APPROPRIATE FOR LAOS BUSH OPERATIONS. SUCH RIGID RESTRICTIONS WILL NEED CONSTANTLY BE WAIVED TO ATTAIN REQUIRED FLEXIBILITY REACT TO ENEMY PRESSURES IN LAOS. CRITERIA DESIGNED FOR AIRLINE PILOTS ASSOCIATION DID NOT CONSIDER PARAMILITARY ASPECTS WAR IN LAOS. SCHEDULING CANNOT BE SUFFICIENTLY CENTRALIZED TO MONITOR PACE AND SCOPE [] OPERATIONS AND WE ANTICIPATE DAILY AND HOURLY REVISIONS NECESSITATED BY ENEMY ACTION.

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Contract negotiated
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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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Handwritten notes on the left margin:
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3. AAM UNILATERAL DECISION IN EARLY APRIL TO IMPLEMENT PART 121 FLIGHT TIME CRITERIA BROUGHT UNANIMOUS COUNTRY TEAM OBJECTIONS AND REQUESTS FOR RECONSIDERATION. BASED ON THESE OBJECTIONS, AAM SUSPENDED PLACING RESTRICTIONS IN EFFECT. HOWEVER, WE NOW FIND THAT DCH HELICOPTER CONTRACT INCORPORATES THESE CRITERIA AND THAT ALL USERS IN FACT NOW PAYING FOR EXTRA CREWS REQUIRED UNDER THESE CRITERIA.

4. IT IS UNANIMOUSLY AGREED THAT CREW ATTRITION WILL INCREASE SUBSTANTIALLY DUE TO PROPOSED FLIGHT TIME LIMITATIONS UNLESS COMPENSATING SALARY INCREASES ARE GRANTED FOR INCREASED NUMBERS OF FLIGHT PERSONNEL. SUCH HIGH TURNOVER OF FLIGHT CREW PERSONNEL INTRODUCES OTHER SERIOUS SAFETY HAZARDS FOR FLIGHT OPERATIONS WHICH RELY ON TERRAIN FAMILIARITY, AND WHICH REQUIRE EXTRAORDINARY AMOUNT OF MEMORIZATION TO MAKE UP FOR LACK OF NAVIGATION FACILITIES. THERE IS NO CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE THAT PILOT FATIGUE IS CAUSING HIGH ACCIDENT RATE IN LAOS. MOST STOL ACCIDENTS ARE CAUSED BY OPERATING LIMITATIONS. POLICY ADVOCATED BY AAM WOULD REQUIRE RAPID CREW EXPANSION, WOULD INCREASE IDLE TIME, AND WOULD LEAD TO HIGH CREW TURNOVER; THESE FACTORS HAVE BOTH SAFETY AND SECURITY IMPLICATIONS. WHILE MISSION IS VITALLY INTERESTED IN FLIGHT SAFETY ISSUE, WE BELIEVE ALL FACTORS MUST BE FULLY INVESTIGATED RATHER THAN UNILATERAL AND PREMATURE PIECEMEAL APPROACH.

5. ONE FACTOR, WHICH AS NOTED ABOVE SHOULD ONLY BE CONSIDERED AS PART OF OVERALL ANALYSIS, IS ADDED FINANCIAL COST OF AIR OPERATIONS. DCH REPRESENTATIVE ESTIMATES THAT FLIGHT TIME RESTRICTIONS IN HELICOPTER CONTRACT WILL RESULT IN ADDITIONAL DIRECT EXPENDITURE RATE OF \$360,000 ANNUALLY. THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE COSTS OF ATTRITION, RETRAINING, COMPENSATING SALARY INCREASES, FACILITIES FOR PROLONGED POSITIONING OF EXTRA CREWS [REDACTED] DEADHEADING COSTS, ETC. AAM HAS NEVER RESPONDED TO OFFICIAL USAID REQUEST FOR ESTIMATING ADDITIONAL FIXED WING CONTRACT COSTS RESULTING FROM THEIR PROPOSED FLIGHT TIME POLICY.

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6. AMBASSADOR'S DETAILED COMMENTS WERE FORWARDED TO CAS/W FOR CONSIDERATION BY AAM BOARD OF DIRECTORS PRIOR TO THEIR IMPLEMENTATION NEW FLIGHT TIME RESTRICTIONS. APPARENT THAT AMBASSADOR'S COMMENTS WERE IGNORED IN NEGOTIATING NEW HELICOPTER OPERATIONS CONTRACT WITH DCH.

7. TO ASSURE THAT OPERATIONS HERE WILL NOT BE HAMPERED, WE BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT THAT AID/DEPARTMENT CONSULT WITH AAM BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO OBTAIN MODIFICATION THEIR PROPOSED PILOT FLIGHT TIME RESTRICTIONS. ADVISE SOONEST.

GP-3. HURWITCH

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PRIORITY DIRECTOR INFO PRIORITY

TAIPEI

REFS: A.
B.
C.

1. PRIOR TO AMBASSADOR'S DEPARTURE MR. MENDENHALL REPORTED THAT DEPCHJUSMAG (DCH) HAD PARTICIPATED IN RENEGOTIATION OF 0028 CONTRACT BETWEEN [] AND APRFE AND TACITLY CONCURRED WITH INCORPORATION FAR PART 121 FLIGHT TIME RESTRICTIONS WITHOUT PRIOR COORDINATION WITH MISSION. AMBASSADOR CONSIDERS DCH PART OF COUNTRY TEAM AND WAS PROVOKED TO LEARN OF THIS FAIT ACCOMPLI BY [] AFTER CONVEYING HIS STRONG OPPOSITION TO THIS PLAN IN REF B AS REQUESTED PARA 2, REF C.

2. AMBASSADOR IS PERTURBED THAT [] NEVER RESPONDED IN DISCUSSION NOR ANSWERED MISSION REQUEST FOR COST STUDY.

3. AMBASSADOR REQUESTED STRONG POSITION (REF A) BE FORWARDED WASHINGTON FOR HIS ARRIVAL. BELIEVE HQS SHOULD PREPARE FOR THIS DISCUSSION.

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~~SECRET EYES ONLY~~

17 MAY 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: DD/ SUBJECT

George :

As you will see from the attached memorandum from the DD/P, Mendenhall's cable has drawn a strong reaction. Last night we talked about the points in the cable which needed rebuttal or comment; to summarize:

- a. In paragraph 1 we should document if possible and if that is not possible clearly explain the sequence of events and requirements that led to the introduction of flight time standards into the 1841 contract.
- b. In paragraph 2 we should agree that U.S. domestic air carrier flight time standards are inappropriate for Laos bush operations, and perhaps we should even attach a copy of the photographs that you have of typical landing sites. In other words, we should make a good case that U.S. commercial standards are more "liberal" than bush operation standards should be.
- c. In paragraph 3, although Mendenhall has no way of knowing that the Air America decision was not unilateral but was in fact an adoption of a policy established by SOD, we should make that point clear in corresponding with the Vientiane and with any cleared contacts that you have at AID. The DD/P should also be reminded of this.
- d. In paragraph 4, Mendenhall states that there is no conclusive evidence that pilot fatigue is causing high accident rates in Laos. While we can agree that conclusive proof is seldom available, we can compare the pilot accident rate in Laos with the accident rate in Vietnam to show that the accident rate not attributable to gun fire is excessively high.

~~SECRET EYES ONLY~~

- 2 -

e. In paragraph 5, the cable talks about the financial implications and refers to an additional direct expenditure rate of 360K. Your comments on the cost of fixing up broken airplanes should be emphasized here.

f. In the same paragraph, the cable says that Air America has never responded to AID's request for estimated additional fixed wing contract costs. I am under the impression that one reason for this is our inability to properly focus on the scheduling problem so that we can know exactly how many additional crews are needed, if any. In any case, we should probably needle the field to respond.

Actions now required appear to be the following and in the order of priority indicated:

- a. A response to the DD/P memorandum.
- b. A cable to commenting on the inaccuracies and other statements in the referent message.
- c. Contact with AID to make sure that their reply to Mendenhall puts the whole matter in proper perspective and assures him that his 360K is not the controlling factor in a para-military war.

In your opinion, do we have the very best scheduling expertise available in the entire complex looking at Vientiane's problem. Perhaps some TDY as was done for helicopter flying operations would help. Finally, any thoughts you have as to how we go about getting better advance planning from the customers will be welcome.

SIGNED Alan M. Warfield

Alan M. Warfield

Distribution:

Origl - Addressee w/att

1 - DD/S

1 - DD/S Subject

1 - Mr. Kiley (xerox)

~~SECRET EYES ONLY~~